

Chap. XIV} SADHANAS FOR REALISING GOD.

241

nothing if it is not accompanied or followed by thought and the mental effort to understand and be deeply convinced of religious truths. Conviction can come out of thought only—deep and systematic thought—leading not merely to a mastery of the contents of religious books,—of the findings of the various systems of philosophy and theology—but to ^ nothing less than the building up of a regular system in the mind—a system of reasoned conclusions and verified intuitions about the leading truths of spiritual religion. The building up of such a system is called *manana*, a system absolutely necessary before the possibility of the next *sadhana* which is called *mdidhyasana*, continuous meditation (yoga), to mentally realise the presence of God as the only Reality. *Thu* ^ all these three processes lead to the final goal—*darsana*, the direct realisation of God as the Self, as our own self and as the self of the Universe, when the heart is at once set *athrill* by a profound feeling of a sacred and vivifying Presence encompassing us and the soul is elevated above the world of sense and exalted into the Sanctifying Presence, the Holy of *Holies*. In the words

of **Sankara** :—^{cc} It is when these are combined and not otherwise that there arises a distinct vision relating to the unity of God and the individual self/'

In this connection, it may also be stated that **mdidhyasana** was conceived as having three stages—**dharana**, **dhyana** and **samadhi**. To grasp Brahman as the self and the world—to catch hold of Him, as it were, as 'this is it' is named **dharana**. To tighten this grasp when it becomes loose is called **dhyana**. When through this attempt, there remains nothing between the **dhyafa** and the **dhyaya**, the subject and the object of **meditation**.so that they become indissoluble, the stage is called **samadhi** which is a condition of perfect bliss and unspotted holiness and gives us a foretaste of liberation. When it becomes permanent in life. it is called **jivanmukti** (liberation while still living). Even when it does